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Agenda item 113

**Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's
Indigenous People****Programme of activities of the International Decade of the
World's Indigenous People****Report of the Secretary-General****Contents**

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 52/108 of 12 December 1997, the General Assembly decided to appoint the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as coordinator for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004), and, in subsequent resolutions, requested the United Nations High Commissioner to submit, through the Secretary-General, an annual report on the implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade. The Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1999/51 of 27 April 1999, requested the High Commissioner to submit to the General Assembly, at its fifty-fourth session, a mid-term report reviewing the implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade, including identification of obstacles to the achievement of the goals of the Decade and recommendations for solutions to overcome those obstacles. The High Commissioner was requested to take into account the views of Member States, the specialized agencies, organizations of indigenous people and other interested bodies in the preparation of such a report.

2. The present report provides information about the activities of the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations, relating to indigenous peoples. Insufficient information was received from Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and indigenous organizations for inclusion in the present report.

Background: the objectives of the International Decade

3. The General Assembly, by its resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993, proclaimed the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The goal of the Decade is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, culture, the environment, development, education and health. The theme of the Decade is "Indigenous people: partnership in action".

4. In its resolution 50/157 of 21 December 1995, the General Assembly adopted the programme of activities for the Decade, contained in the annex to that resolution. In addition to the overall goal of the Decade, the General Assembly identified a number of specific general objectives, in particular: (a) the development of activities benefiting indigenous peoples by the specialized agencies of the United

Nations system and other intergovernmental and national agencies; (b) the education of indigenous and non-indigenous societies concerning the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous peoples; (c) the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous people; (d) the implementation of the recommendations pertaining to indigenous people of all high-level international conferences, including the proposal to establish a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system; (e) the adoption of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the further development of international standards as well as national legislation for the protection and promotion of the human rights of indigenous people. The General Assembly proposed that the Decade should be assessed by quantifiable outcomes that improve the lives of indigenous people and that an evaluation be made halfway through the Decade and at its end.

5. The programme of activities contained in the annex to resolution 50/157 contains a list of proposals or activities that should be undertaken by the major actors, of which 38 concern intergovernmental organizations, and underlined the importance of consultation and cooperation with indigenous people in planning and implementing the programme of activities for the Decade. Subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights have recommended additional activities, under the aegis of the Decade programme to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as well as to other United Nations organizations and specialized agencies. The present report reviews the extent to which it has been possible to realize these activities.

II. Overview

6. The information received or otherwise available from several United Nations system organizations attests to an evolution over the last five years in the development of policy guidelines, programme activities, consultation mechanisms, specific funding and staff resources being dedicated to indigenous peoples issues. A number of organizations, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) or the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), state that they have launched initiatives or decided to review their programmes and policies relating to indigenous peoples as a result of the Decade. Some United Nations system organizations have provided information about their activities but have indicated that they are also

managing many projects on indigenous peoples at the national level.

7. Within the United Nations as a whole, the issue of indigenous people is at different stages of evolution. ILO first began to seek to protect indigenous rights in the 1920s, elaborated a convention specifically on indigenous and tribal populations in 1957, and has been responsible since 1989 for the only two international instruments exclusively on indigenous peoples. The Office of the High Commissioner dates its involvement in the question to the inception of a special study on discrimination against indigenous populations in 1970, and its formal contacts with indigenous peoples to the establishment of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in 1982. The World Bank adopted its first policy guidelines on indigenous peoples in 1982. For these organizations, the Decade offers an opportunity to renew, review and strengthen their ongoing activities. In some other organizations whose mandates were felt to include indigenous peoples only as part of the vulnerable groups targeted by their activities, the Decade has stimulated an internal review and a recognition of the cultural specificity and special needs of indigenous communities. This is the case of the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Asian Development Bank (AsDB) and UNDP, for example. Since a number of United Nations organizations are now actively developing specific programmes of action, it may be stated that the General Assembly's objective is being met by a growing number of United Nations organizations and agencies. It may also be noted, however, that there is virtually no United Nations activity which does not affect indigenous people in some way or another and in which indigenous people do not have a legitimate interest.

8. In reviewing the information provided by United Nations organizations concerning their own internal guidelines for policy and programmes, it may be observed that ILO Convention No. 169 and the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, even though this latter document is not yet adopted by the General Assembly, often serve as a guide for United Nations agencies when they are considering issues relating to definition, consultation and community participation, indigenous political and social institutions or development priorities. Other agencies have stated that, although they undertake a number of activities benefiting indigenous communities they do not have a policy directive. This is the case for the World Food Programme (WFP), for example. No universal standards on indigenous peoples guide the United Nations as a whole and, in practice, United Nations organizations are either not adopting any particular guidelines or else are developing guidelines on the

basis of different procedures, including in-house and external consultations and the integration of elements of ILO Convention No. 169, the draft declaration or some other instrument.

9. Several United Nations organizations have specific programmes and projects that have been undertaken or are being implemented during the Decade. Other United Nations agencies noted that, although they had no specific programmes for indigenous people, their communities could benefit from activities targeting vulnerable groups. All of the principal United Nations organizations and specialized agencies are now undertaking or are planning specific activities on indigenous peoples.

10. An increasing number of United Nations organizations, including WIPO, WHO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNDP and the World Bank, are organizing consultations with indigenous peoples to help them as they develop internal guidelines on indigenous issues and outline overall strategy. A number of United Nations organizations indicate that indigenous people are consulted in projects at the national level. In some instances, this may also mean that indigenous people are actively involved in all stages of a project. The ILO Interregional Programme to Support Self-reliance of Indigenous and Tribal Communities through cooperatives and other Self-help Organizations, for example, aims to help indigenous communities design and implement their own development plans and initiatives. As far as can be ascertained, these consultations have greatly enhanced the input by indigenous people into the programme planning of United Nations organizations. Indeed, in the case of certain United Nations organizations, whose portals had hardly been crossed by indigenous people prior to the Decade, the consultations may even have precipitated a small and welcome revolution in their traditional position of reticence in their dealings with NGOs.

11. Implicit in the theme of the Decade, "Indigenous people: partnership in action", and in the proposal to create a permanent forum is the notion that indigenous people and organizations should have recognized rights of participation in the United Nations decision-making bodies and have a formal or institutional role in international policy-formulation and policy-making in areas affecting their lives. The permanent forum proposal, under discussions in a working group of the Commission on Human Rights, may eventually serve, *inter alia*, as the principal advisory body on indigenous matters for the United Nations system as a whole and consideration is now being given as to how indigenous people may be made members of that body. Until such time as the permanent forum becomes a reality,

indigenous people will continue to participate in the distinct United Nations organizations on quite different bases. Consultations with indigenous people are often on an ad hoc basis and the recommendations arising from such consultations do not necessarily have any institutional recognition. Very few parts of the United Nations system have established formal channels for the participation of indigenous people in their activities. Perhaps the only two exceptions are the human rights programme and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which has recently established a working group on article 8 (j) of the Convention.

12. The programme of activities for the International Decade, contained in the annex to resolution 50/157, set forth objectives and a list of activities to be undertaken by the major actors. As far as the objectives are concerned, information has been provided about the development activities being undertaken by the United Nations system (para. A.2), the implementation of the high-level conferences and the progress towards establishing a permanent forum for indigenous people (para. A.5) and standard-setting, in particular the situation regarding the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people (para. A.6). Some information has been given in relation to the empowerment and participation of indigenous people within the United Nations system (para. A.4). One major objective of the Decade is the education of non-indigenous societies about the situations, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous people (para A.3). The Department of Public Information has produced a poster and some public information materials and the Non-Governmental Liaison Service has published a roundup on indigenous issues for distribution through its NGO network. However, the United Nations system has not to date undertaken a global public awareness programme.

13. The formal observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People on 9 August, has become a well-attended and effective event in both Geneva and New York. In New York the focus has been mainly on providing a forum for the United Nations organizations to meet with indigenous representatives to exchange information on activities; in Geneva indigenous people themselves celebrate their own cultures through a morning event of dance, song, story and music that now attracts good press coverage, not only of the event itself but of the concerns and aspirations of indigenous people. Official observances of the Decade at high-level conferences have not been realized nor has the United Nations Population Fund produced a special series of stamps.

14. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was requested to undertake 15 activities

during the Decade. Some of the infrastructural proposals (the establishment of a focal unit, the secondment of staff, the creation of an advisory group) as well as those activities relating to the fellowship programme and human rights training are being realized. Preliminary work has been done to improve the flow of information about United Nations programmes to indigenous communities through the workshop on indigenous media and its follow-up. Furthermore, the Office of the High Commissioner has developed a database of indigenous organizations. Within the limits of its budget, and in line with recommendations from the legislative bodies of the United Nations, the Office has organized a number of meetings on relevant themes of concern.

15. Information has been provided about the focal points, programmes and funds of United Nations system organizations in relation to indigenous peoples as well as mechanisms for indigenous participation (paras. B.30, 31, 32 and 36). The Office of the High Commissioner, in collaboration with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, is finalizing the guide proposed by the General Assembly (para. B.33). Some United Nations organizations have referred to research activities they are undertaking (para. B.34). The Office of the High Commissioner and ILO have organized inter-agency consultations on a regular basis since the beginning of the Decade, and organizations such as UNDP, WIPO and WHO have held inter-agency consultations to exchange information on specific themes. As far as is known, no United Nations organization is preparing a database on national legislation on matters of relevance to indigenous people (para. B.39).

16. Two problems faced in implementing the Decade's activities are the limited human resources available and the lack of funding for the activities themselves. Only a quarter of the United Nations organizations for which information was available have a designated focal point or unit for indigenous people or for the Decade. Contributions to the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade, established by the General Assembly to fund activities of the Decade, totalled some US\$ 1.1 million in the period from January 1995 to October 1999. Three countries provided more than 70 per cent of the contributions, and one of these, Denmark, 40 per cent. At the present time, insufficient funds are available to complete the programme approved by the Advisory Group and the High Commissioner for 1999 and no funds are available for the programme for 2000.

17. The proclamation of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People has raised high expectations among indigenous people worldwide. It has set objectives

which are ambitious but realistic. The achievement of some of the goals of the Decade — the adoption of a declaration and the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations — are dependent upon the will of Member States and progress in the negotiations. The High Commissioner for Human Rights has expressed her support for this process and stands ready to cooperate in any way which would advance the realization of these two important goals. With respect to the other objectives of the Decade and the fulfilment of the broader trust which indigenous peoples have in the United Nations system, it is necessary to renew the commitment of the international community to contributing to improvements in the lives of indigenous people. It is recommended that Governments consider holding a meeting during 2000, at which specific practical and realizable projects, in particular inter-agency activities, could be elaborated and endorsed. This would also be an opportunity for the international community, Governments and United Nations organizations to demonstrate their support for the world's indigenous people.



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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 76
General and complete disarmament

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Identical letters dated 11 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the SADC Council Decisions on the Prevention and Combating of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Related Crimes, adopted at the Summit of the Heads of State or Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), held at Maputo on 17 and 18 August 1999 (see annex).

I would highly appreciate it if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 76 and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Carlos Dos SANTOS
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative to the United Nations

Annex

SADC Council Decisions, 13-14 August 1999: Prevention
and Combating of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and
Related Crimes

The Council noted that conflicts in the SADC region over many years have led to a proliferation of arms, including light weapons. This has in turn contributed to an increase in criminal activities such as armed robberies and illicit trafficking in small arms.

The Council noted the various arrangements for combating illicit arms trafficking and cross-border crime. These include the Regional Agreement for Cooperation and Law Enforcement and the establishment of the Southern African Regional Police Cooperation (SARPPCO).

The Council noted that these developments would require a well-coordinated framework in SADC. A developmental dimension to the problem was required over and above a focus on law enforcement.

It was further agreed that small arms was a simple means for promoting crime. SADC needed to combine regional energies and resources to prevent resorting to small arms as a means of survival.

Bearing in mind the above, the following steps were approved by the Council:

- SADC should commit itself to the effective combating of armed transborder crime and the reduction and control of the flow of illicit arms;
- SADC should establish a regional policy for control of small arms and light weapons. SARPPCO should be appointed as the implementing agency of the SADC policy on small arms and cross-border crime prevention. The ministries responsible for law and order or safety should be the SADC national focal points on the issues of prevention and combating of small arms and related crimes.

A working group consisting of Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland (Chair), Zambia, Zimbabwe, the Secretariat and SARPPCO should be appointed to work out the SADC policy on small arms and develop a programme for implementation at the regional level. Other member States wishing to join the working group may do so.



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Security Council

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Agenda items 20, 105 and 110
STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF
HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF
ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST UNITED NATIONS
DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY
(1997-2006)
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE
FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 22 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of
Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward the attached press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea on 21 October 1999 on the deportation of ethnic Eritreans by the Ethiopian Government through the war zone in defiance of the arrangements made by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 20, 105 and 110, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Haile MENKERIOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex

Press release: Tigray People's Liberation Front deports ethnic
Eritreans through war zone in defiance of arrangements made by
the International Committee of the Red Cross

The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) regime rounded up 1,300 ethnic Eritreans in Addis Ababa yesterday evening and loaded them on 29 buses for deportation through the war zone. According to the office of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Addis Ababa, the deportees are likely to be dumped at the Burie Front tomorrow night.

The TPLF regime is perpetrating this act precisely at a time when ICRC has been conducting discussions with both Governments on a scheme for airlifting the deportees. This has become necessary because the usual exit points through which TPLF has deported the 63,000 ethnic Eritreans at previous times are not safe or accessible anymore owing to heightened tension. (Many of the deportees are also critically ill.) The fact is TPLF has virtually completed its preparations and seems set to launch an all-out offensive any day now.

The underlying motive to deport these people at this time is in itself suspect as these people were evicted from their homes and businesses more than six months ago. TPLF has refused to let them go before, claiming that the exit points in the border areas "are insecure".

The callous act by TPLF, which may endanger the lives of these helpless deportees, is a vivid illustration of its disrespect of human life and international law. It also illustrates the contempt with which it holds the international community. Indeed, the Ethiopian Prime Minister had assured the ICRC President during his visit to Addis Ababa in August that his regime "would refrain from further deportations". And only last week, the Joint Assembly of the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Union called upon "the Council of the European Union to prevail upon Ethiopia to accept and implement the peace package of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and prevent the continued violation of the human rights of ethnic Eritreans in Ethiopia".

On the other hand, it is clear that Ethiopia has continued to perpetrate these violations with impunity because international reaction has been feeble throughout.

But the present act should not be tolerated. The safety of the deportees is at great risk as they may be caught in crossfire that TPLF may provoke or other hazards of war.

The international community must therefore prevail upon Ethiopia and demand, in strong and clear terms, that it rescind this action and ensure that these people are deported safely through the arrangements that ICRC has been working on. The Government of Eritrea will, as always, receive its nationals but the TPLF regime shall assume responsibility for any consequences that may ensue.



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Security Council

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF
HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF
ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS
RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND
DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN
QUESTIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

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(Signed) Haile MENKERIOS
Ambassador
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* Reissued for technical reasons.

Annex

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The underlying motive to deport these people at this time is in itself suspect as these people were evicted from their homes and businesses more than six months ago. TPLF has refused to let them go before, claiming that the exit points in the border areas "are insecure".

The callous act by TPLF, which may endanger the lives of these helpless deportees, is a vivid illustration of its disrespect of human life and international law. It also illustrates the contempt with which it holds the international community. Indeed, the Ethiopian Prime Minister had assured the ICRC President during his visit to Addis Ababa in August that his regime "would refrain from further deportations". And only last week, the Joint Assembly of the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Union called upon "the Council of the European Union to prevail upon Ethiopia to accept and implement the peace package of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and prevent the continued violation of the human rights of ethnic Eritreans in Ethiopia".

On the other hand, it is clear that Ethiopia has continued to perpetrate these violations with impunity because international reaction has been feeble throughout.

But the present act should not be tolerated. The safety of the deportees is at great risk as they may be caught in crossfire that TPLF may provoke or other hazards of war.

The international community must therefore prevail upon Ethiopia and demand, in strong and clear terms, that it rescind this action and ensure that these people are deported safely through the arrangements that ICRC has been working on. The Government of Eritrea will, as always, receive its nationals but the TPLF regime shall assume responsibility for any consequences that may ensue.



General Assembly

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Fifty-fourth session

Agenda item 150

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) for the 12-month period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000 (A/54/455). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General who provided additional information.
2. The Committee notes the improved presentation of the budget but believes there is room for further improvement, in particular as regards the explanations of increases/decreases in the annexes.
3. The original budget of UNOMSIL (A/53/454/Add.1) amounted to \$16,412,400 gross (\$15,560,400 net) and was based on the strength of 70 military observers, a 15-person medical unit and 5 civilian police advisers supported by 50 international civilian and 48 local staff, authorized by Security Council resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998.
4. Having reviewed the proposed budget on 22 February 1999, the Advisory Committee, owing to the prevailing security situation and uncertainty as to the future deployment of UNOMSIL at that time, refrained from making recommendations to the General Assembly on the budget. As a result, the Fifth Committee took no action during its resumed fifty-third session on the financing of UNOMSIL for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000.
5. By a letter dated 15 June 1999, the Advisory Committee concurred with the request of the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount not exceeding \$5,470,800 gross (\$5,186,800 net) for the maintenance of UNOMSIL for the 4-month period from 1 July to 31 October 1999 (see annex I).
6. Following the signing on 7 July 1999 of the Lomé Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, the Secretary-General, in his seventh report to the Security Council on UNOMSIL (S/1999/836 and Add.1), set out his recommendations on the immediate measures that should be taken to strengthen the Mission, including the deployment to Sierra Leone of an additional 140 military observers, the introduction of a second-line medical capability of 35 personnel and the strengthening of the Mission with additional civilian staff.
7. By its resolution 1260 (1999) of 20 August 1999, the Security Council, *inter alia*, authorized the provisional expansion of UNOMSIL to up to 210 military observers along with the necessary equipment and administrative and medical support, as well as the strengthening of the political, civil affairs, information, human rights and child protection



elements of UNOMSIL, as set out in the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General (S/1999/836, paras. 40-52), including the appointment of a deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the expansion of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

8. Pending the completion of the present report and in order to provide for the immediate operational requirements of UNOMSIL with regard to the deployment of additional military observers and a medical unit, as well as the acquisition of vehicles, communications and other equipment, the Advisory Committee, by a letter dated 20 September 1999, concurred with the request of the Secretary-General to enter into additional commitments in an amount not exceeding \$6,437,300 (see annex II). Thus, the total commitment authority provided by the Advisory Committee for the maintenance of UNOMSIL and for its provisional expansion amounts to \$11,908,100 gross (\$11,624,100 net).

9. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 30 September 1999, of the \$11,624,100 approved by the Committee, expenditure had amounted to \$3,562,800, leaving an unencumbered balance of \$8,197,900.

10. The Advisory Committee notes from table 1 of document A/54/455 that the revised budget of UNOMSIL for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000 amounts to \$34,382,400 (gross), an increase of \$17,970,000 when compared to the original estimate of \$16,412,400 for the same period. The increase is due to the additional requirements for the provisional expansion of UNOMSIL, authorized by the Security Council in resolution 1260 (1999).

11. As indicated in paragraphs 13 to 18 of document A/54/455, the cost estimates provide for 210 military observers, 5 civilian police officers and an additional 60 international staff (31 Professional and 29 Field Service) and 21 local staff, for a revised total of 110 international staff (54 Professional, 47 Field Service and 9 General Service) and 69 local staff, including the upgrading of the post levels of Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Finance Officer. The cost estimates also reflect the increase in the number of medical personnel, from 15 to 35.

12. The revised estimates do not include requirements for the proposed peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone proposed by the Secretary-General to the Security Council in his eighth report (S/1999/1003). The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 1 of document A/54/455 that, should the Security Council authorize the deployment of the force,

related additional resource requirements would be submitted to the General Assembly in an addendum to that document.

13. The Advisory Committee notes from section C of annex I to document A/54/455 that staff costs are based on the 1999 standard salary costs for New York and local salary scale applicable to the Mission area and reflect the application of a projected vacancy rate of 10 per cent for international and local staff, as well as salary and common staff costs adjustments for 70 per cent of international staff classified as Mission appointees. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that these cost factors took into account the current vacancy situation in the Mission area and the new personnel positions that have been proposed. With regard to vacancies, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 8 October 1999, of 50 international and 48 local authorized posts, 38 and 46 respectively, were encumbered. The Advisory Committee was also informed that the security situation in the operational area had improved. That being the case, the Advisory Committee urges that speedy recruitment of personnel be undertaken to ensure the full implementation of the mandate of the Mission.

14. An amount of \$9.9 million is proposed in annex I to document A/54/455 for military observers. The Advisory Committee notes from the eighth report of the Secretary-General (S/1999/1003) that 181 military observers would be assigned to reception and demobilization centres. The eighth report of the Secretary-General also makes provision for full-scale disarmament activities in Sierra Leone. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 8 October 1999, of 210 authorized positions for military observers, 141 were encumbered. In this connection, the Advisory Committee requests that the placement of military observers in the Mission area should be carefully synchronized with the start of the functions to which they would be assigned.

15. The Advisory Committee notes from section C of annex II to document A/54/455 that an estimate of \$4,175,100 is proposed for non-recurrent items. The Advisory Committee also notes that some of the unit costs of a number of items differ from the unit costs contained in the most recent standard cost manual for peacekeeping operations (Revision 4, 1998). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the unit costs shown in document A/54/455 reflected the most recent experience with bulk and discount procurement prices. The Advisory Committee was further informed that the manual was being revised and would be ready for use in the preparation of the budgets for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recommends that the terms and classification used in the manual should be

used consistently in budget documents. The Advisory Committee points out that savings in procurement activities would arise to the extent that current estimates are not based on actual costs of services already contracted for; such savings should be reflected in the performance report.

16. Upon enquiry as to the pace of procurement for UNOMSIL, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 13 October 1999, communications equipment worth \$438,101 of the \$456,800 budgeted, and data-processing equipment worth \$486,851 of the \$523,100 budgeted, had been purchased.

17. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 15 of section C of annex I to document A/54/455 that provision for usage charges of \$400,000 for medical equipment is made at an estimated monthly rate of \$50,000, based on a projected value of equipment of \$1.5 million. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that reimbursement would be made to the contributing government for the estimated usage charges for medical equipment provided on a wet-lease basis.

18. The Advisory Committee also notes from item 42 of section A of annex II to document A/54/455 that an amount of \$226,800 is provided for medical services, based on the standard self-sustainment reimbursement rate of \$78.75 per person for an average of 360 personnel. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that this rate was equivalent to the established self-sustainment rate for the second-line medical services payable to a government providing these services to its own personnel and to other international personnel at the expense of the United Nations, should the Organization or governments providing these personnel be unable to arrange for medical services. The Advisory Committee was further informed that, for budgeting purposes, estimates for medical services were based on the authorized strength of the military component and international civilian personnel, including police advisers. The Committee was also informed that routine medical care for local staff is provided through local medical establishments and is subsidized by the Organization through the medical insurance plan administered in the field. Nevertheless, local staff have full access to the United Nations medical facility in life-threatening and emergency situations. In this connection, the Committee points out that the amount of \$440,000 provided for in item 9 (a) of section III of annex I to document A/54/455 is in fact for the transport of medical equipment and not of contingent-owned equipment.

19. With regard to air operations, the Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 12 and 13 of section C of annex I to

document A/54/455 that an amount of \$3,348,800 is requested for two medium utility helicopters and one fixed-wing aircraft. The original cost estimate of \$1,752,700 for 12 months provided for one medium utility helicopter and one fixed-wing aircraft. Upon enquiry as to how the addition of one helicopter would lead to an increase of \$1,596,100, the Advisory Committee was informed that, besides the second helicopter, the increase in the cost estimate under this item was mainly due to the increase in the cost of aviation fuel, which went up from \$0.25 to \$0.37 per litre based on the current contract for aviation fuel, and the cost of positioning/depositioning of the helicopters (\$270,000) and of painting (\$35,000), which had not been included in the original estimate; moreover, there was higher consumption of aviation fuel due to an increase in the extra flying hours per month which rose from 30 to 45 for each helicopter.

20. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 8 October 1999, amounts totalling \$15.8 million had been assessed on Member States for the period from 13 July 1998 to 13 March 1999, while payments received for the same period totalled \$13.0 million, leaving a shortfall of \$2.8 million. The Advisory Committee was further informed that cash available as at 8 October 1999 amounted to \$5 million, while unliquidated obligations for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 stood at \$2.2 million. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, as at 8 October 1999, an amount of \$4.2 million was borrowed from the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund.

21. Upon enquiry as to when the amount borrowed from the Reserve Fund would be refunded, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretariat considered it prudent to reimburse the amount at a subsequent stage. In this connection, the Advisory Committee requests the Secretary-General to provide information on the operation of the Reserve Fund in his report to be submitted to the Advisory Committee at its winter session.

22. The action to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session in connection with the financing of UNOMSIL is outlined in paragraph 22 of document A/54/455. The Secretary-General recommends that the General Assembly: (a) appropriate the amount of \$34,382,400 gross (\$32,870,100 net) for the operation of UNOMSIL for the 12-month period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000, inclusive of the amount of \$11,908,100 gross (\$11,624,100 net) already authorized by the Advisory Committee; (b) assess the amount of \$15,472,080 gross (\$14,791,545 net) for the period from 1 July to 13 December 1999; and (c) assess the amount of \$18,910,320 gross (\$18,078,555 net) for the maintenance of UNOMSIL for the period from 14 December 1999 to 30 June 2000, at a

monthly rate of \$2,865,200 gross (\$2,739,175 net), subject to the extension of the mandate of UNOMSIL by the Security Council beyond 13 December 1999. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the appropriation and assessment proposed by the Secretary-General.

Annex I

Letter dated 15 June 1999 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions addressed to the Secretary-General

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Controller's letter of 11 June 1999, requesting the concurrence of the Advisory Committee to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$5,470,800 gross (\$5,186,800 net) for the maintenance of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) for a 4-month period from 1 July to 31 October 1999. This request is made pursuant to section IV of General Assembly resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994.

During its winter session, the Advisory Committee considered your report on the proposed budget of UNOMSIL for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000 (A/53/454/Add.1).

At that time, owing to the prevailing security situation in Sierra Leone and uncertainty as to the future deployment of UNOMSIL, the Advisory Committee refrained from making recommendations to the General Assembly on the budget. As a result, the Fifth Committee took no action during its recently concluded resumed fifty-third session on the financing of UNOMSIL for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000.

In your sixth report to the Security Council on UNOMSIL (S/1999/645), you informed the Council, *inter alia*, that the peace process in Sierra Leone had made significant progress since your previous report (S/1999/237), culminating in the signing of a ceasefire agreement of 18 May 1999 and the start of dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front at Lomé on 25 May 1999.

You also indicated in paragraph 49 of your report that with the planned deployment of 16 military observers during the month of June 1999, together with the necessary support personnel, vehicles, communications and other essential equipment, the military capacity of the Mission would be restored to the level it had attained in December 1998 and that, security conditions permitting, you would then proceed to deploy additional observers up to the limit of 70, with an additional 15 medical personnel, as authorized by Security Council resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998.

By its resolution 1245 (1999) of 11 June 1999, the Security Council decided, *inter alia*, to extend the mandate of the Observer Mission until 13 December 1999.

In view of the extension of the mandate of UNOMSIL by the Security Council and pending the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and action by the General Assembly on the full 12-month budget of the Observer Mission at its fifty-fourth session, including such revised estimates as may be necessary as the result of the expansion of UNOMSIL, the Advisory Committee concurs with your request to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$5,470,800 gross (\$5,186,800 net) for the maintenance of UNOMSIL for a 4-month period from 1 July to 31 October 1999.

(Signed) C. S. M. Mselle
Chairman

Annex II

Letter dated 20 September 1999 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions addressed to the Secretary-General

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Controller's letter of 14 September 1999, seeking the concurrence of the Advisory Committee to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$6,437,300 for the deployment of an additional 140 military observers and a medical unit, as well as the acquisition of vehicles, communication and other equipment for the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). This request is made pursuant to section IV of General Assembly resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994 on administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

During its winter session, the Advisory Committee considered your report on the proposed budget of UNOMSIL for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000 (A/53/454/Add.1).

At that time, owing to the prevailing security situation in Sierra Leone and uncertainty as to the future deployment of UNOMSIL, the Advisory Committee refrained from making recommendations to the General Assembly on the budget. As a result, the Fifth Committee took no action during its resumed fifty-third session on the financing of UNOMSIL for the period from 1 July 1999 to 2000.

By its resolution 1245 (1999) of 11 June 1999, the Security Council decided, *inter alia*, to extend the mandate of UNOMSIL until 13 December 1999.

In view of the extension of the mandate of UNOMSIL by the Security Council and pending the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and action by the General Assembly on the full 12-month budget of the Observer Mission at its fifty-fourth session, the Advisory Committee, by a letter dated 15 June 1999, concurred with the request to enter into commitments in the amount of \$5,470,800 gross (\$5,186,800 net) for the maintenance of the Observer Mission for the 4-month period from 1 July to 31 October 1999.

In your seventh report to the Security Council on UNOMSIL (S/1999/836 and Add.1), you recommended the immediate measures that should be taken to strengthen the Observer Mission, including the deployment to Sierra Leone of additional military observers, the introduction of a second-line medical capability of 35 personnel and the strengthening of the Observer Mission with additional civilian staff.

By its resolution 1260 (1999) of 20 August 1999, the Security Council, *inter alia*, authorized the provisional expansion of UNOMSIL to up to 210 military observers along with the necessary equipment and administrative and medical support to perform the tasks set out in paragraph 38 of your report. The Council also authorized strengthening of the political, civil affairs, information, human rights and child protection elements of UNOMSIL, as set out in paragraphs 40 to 52 of your report, including the appointment of a deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the expansion of the Office of Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

The Advisory Committee was informed by your representatives that the full estimated requirements for the provisional expansion of the Observer Mission were currently being finalized and would be submitted to the Committee and the General Assembly by the end of September 1999 in the context of the revised budget of UNOMSIL for the 1999-2000 financial period.

Under the circumstances, pursuant to section IV of General Assembly resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994, the Advisory Committee concurs with your request to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$6,437,300 for the deployment of the additional 140 military observers and a medical unit, as well as the acquisition of vehicles, communication and other equipment for UNOMSIL. Thus, the total commitment authority provided to you for the maintenance of the Observer Mission and for its provisional expansion would amount to \$11,908,100 gross (\$11,624,100 net).

(Signed) C. S. M. Mselle
Chairman
